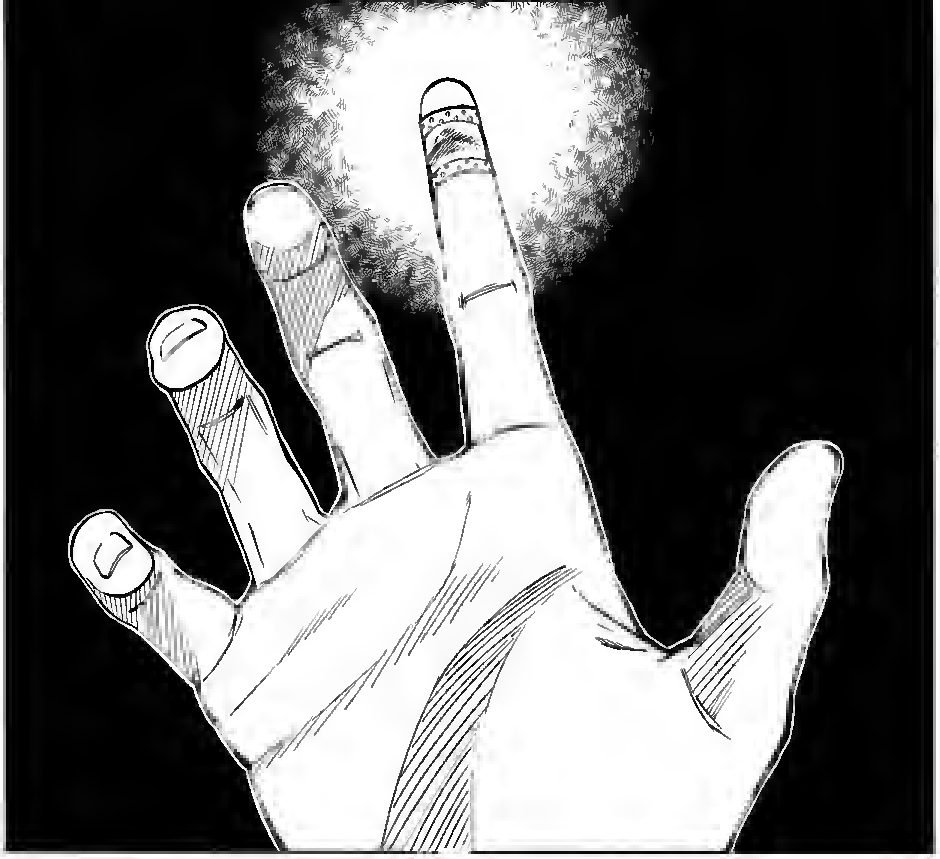
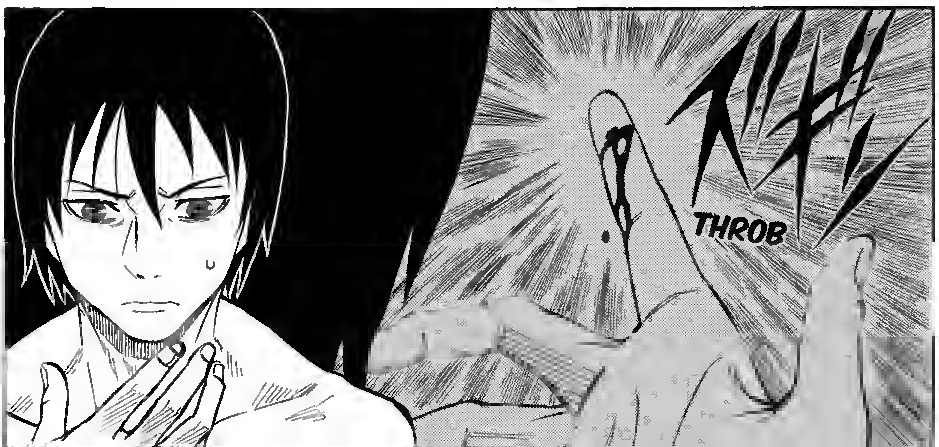
SUKEDACHI NINE
助太刀09

VWEEEEER
BOOOM
PSHOO
PSHOO
PSHOO
KCHIK
KCHIK
FYOOO



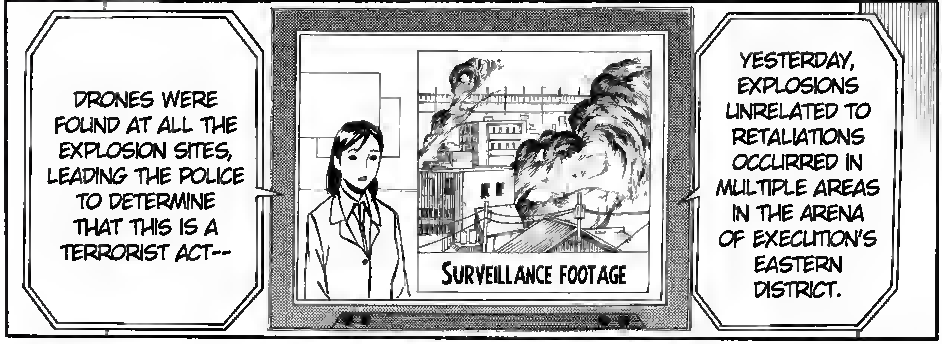
MIRROR:15 TWO SIDES OF YOURSELF (3)

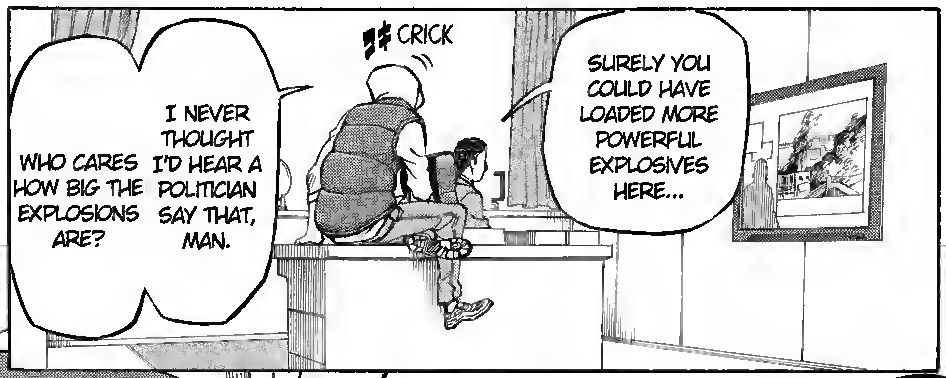


カチャ
CHIK
!
WRAP
...THE PAIN'S GONE AWAY...
WAS IT MY IMAGINA-TION...?
!?
TCLIML
.....
PTT
!!!
CLUTCH

SQUEEEZE
BACK!
GIVE... IT...
SQUEEEEZE
HAU-GH!
HRGK!
GHAAK!
HUFF
HAAH

BE CAREFUL WHEN YOU DEAL WITH THAT OTHER SIDE OF YOURSELF, OKAY?
WHAT... WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?!
YUU...
...ICHI?
...NO... I JUST LOST MYSELF FOR A MOMENT, THAT'S ALL...!
KREE
I AM WHO I AM. THESE ARMS... THESE LEGS... MY MIND...
I'M THE ONE IN CONTROL OF THEM...!!

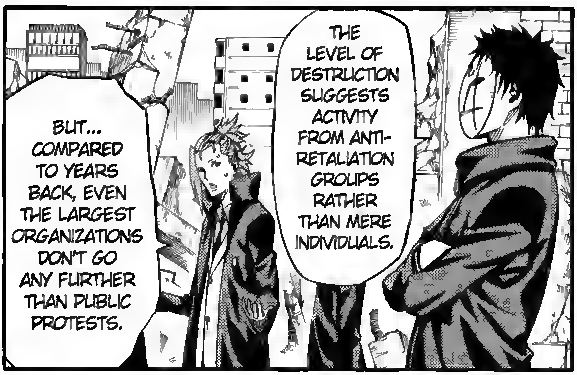

DRONES WERE FOUND AT ALL THE EXPLOSION SITES, LEADING THE POLICE TO DETERMINE THAT THIS IS A TERRORIST ACT--
SURVEILLANCE FOUGATE
YESTERDAY, EXPLOSIONS UNRELATED TO RETALIATIONS OCCURRED IN MULTIPLE AREAS IN THE ARENA OF EXECUTION'S EASTERN DISTRICT.


CRICK
SURELY YOU COULD HAVE LOADED MORE POWERFUL EXPLOSIVES HERE...
I NEVER THOUGHT I'D HEAR A POLITICIAN SAY THAT, MAN.
WHO CARES HOW BIG THE EXPLOSIONS ARE?

AH, WELL. THIS EVENT IS NO MORE THAN A CHANCE FOR US TO MOVE, ANYWAY.
OF COURSE.
SO WE CAN CRUSH THE DEATH BY RETALIATION LAW...
--LANCE FOOTAGE
CREAK
Mikoto Mitobotoke

HOO BOY... THIS WAS PRETTY ARTFULLY DONE.

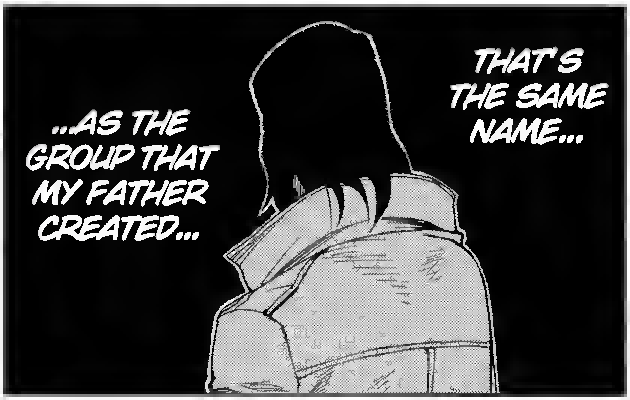
RUMORS ABOUND THAT AN EXTREMIST GROUP SPUN OFF FROM A MORE WELL-ESTABLISHED PROTEST ORGANIZATION.
NO, THERE'S STILL ONE OUT THERE.

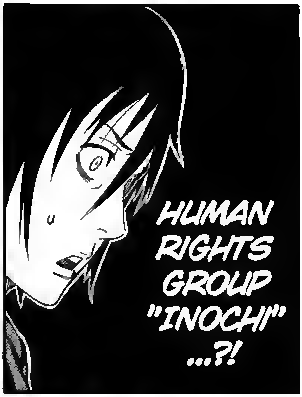

THE LEVEL OF DESTRUCTION SUGGESTS ACTIVITY FROM ANTI-RETALIATION GROUPS RATHER THAN MERE INDIVIDUALS.
BUT... COMPARED TO YEARS BACK, EVEN THE LARGEST ORGANIZATIONS DON'T GO ANY FURTHER THAN PUBLIC PROTESTS.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY, THE HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP...
"SPUN OFF" FROM A MORE WELL-ESTABLISHED ORGANIZATION..?

I'M SURE THE ASSISTORS WILL FIND THEMSELVES...
...BUTTING HEADS WITH THE ORGANIZATION I WAS WITH.
AMONG THEIR MEMBERS WAS GEN AKUTSU...
...WHO FELLED HASHIBA YEARS BACK.

"INOCHI."

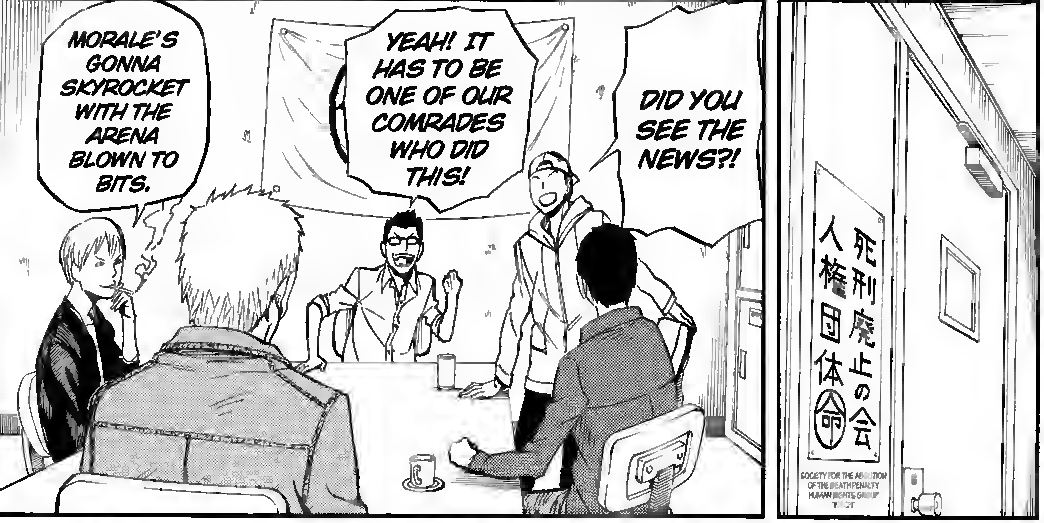

..AS THE GROUP THAT MY FATHER CREATED...
THAT'S THE SAME NAME...

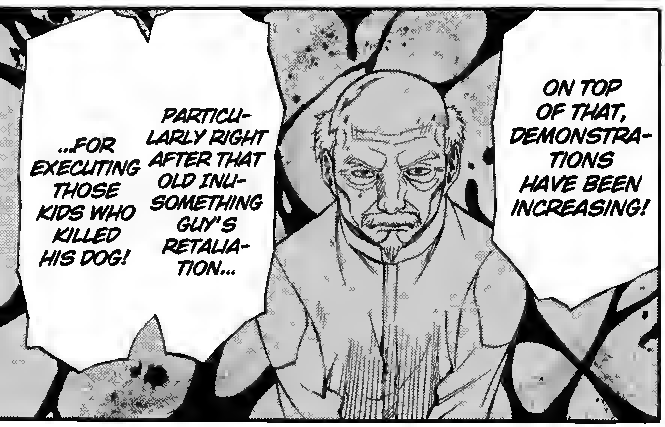

HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP "INOCHI" ...?!

ALL THAT'S LEFT IS FOR OUR LITTLE BIRD TO GIVE US SOMETHING TO GO ON...

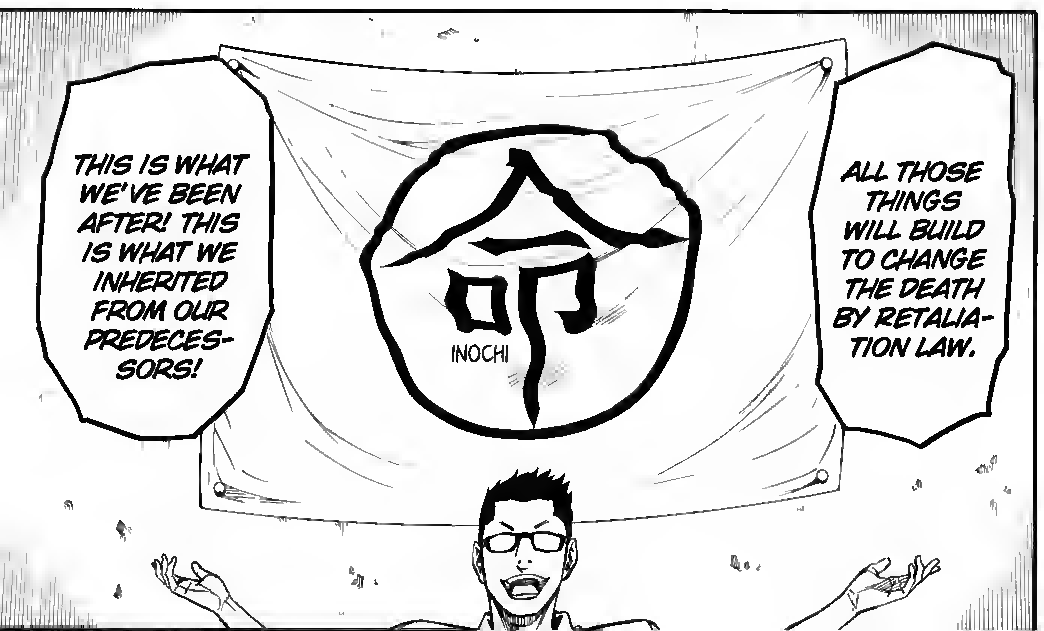
HOWEVER, WITH THIS ONE ACT, WE NOW KNOW FOR SURE THAT THESE EXTREMISTS HAVE ORGANIZED.
THIS IS THEIR BROADCAST TO US.

.....
WE DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THESE EXTREMISTS BESIDES THE FACT THAT THEY BRANCHED OFF FROM THE MAIN GROUP...

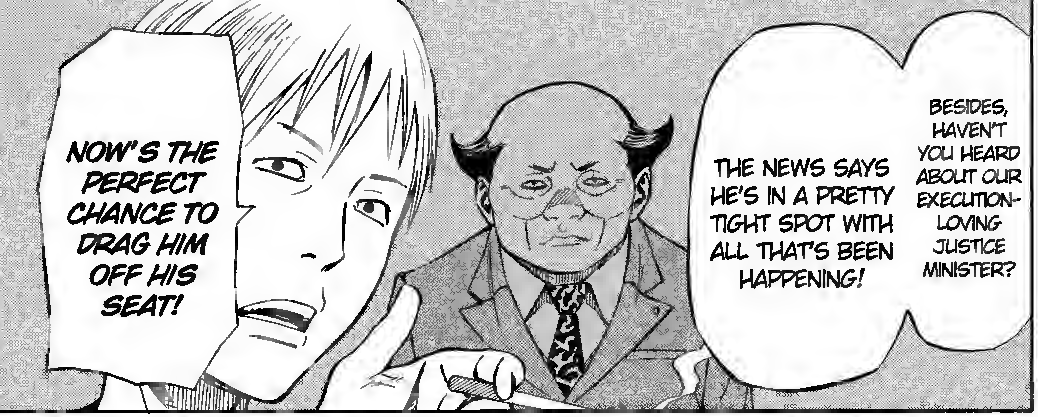

MORALE'S GONNA SKYROCKET WITH THE ARENA BLOWN TO BITS.
YEAH! IT HAS TO BE ONE OF OUR COMRADES WHO DID THIS!
DID YOU SEE THE NEWS?!
死刑廃止の会
人権団体
命
SOCIETY FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP INOCHI

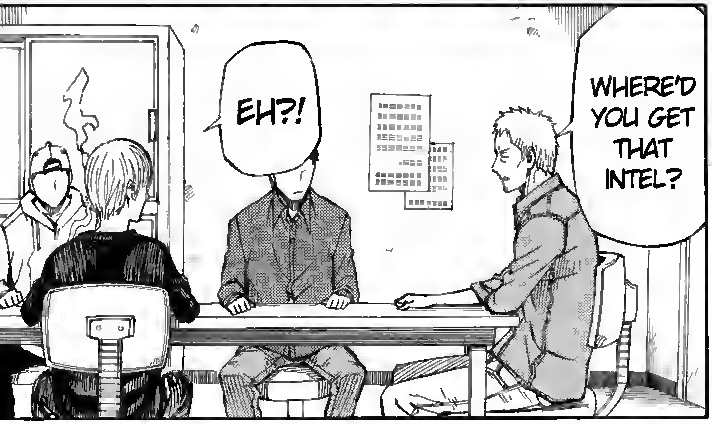

...FOR EXECUTING THOSE KIDS WHO KILLED HIS DOG!
PARTICULARLY RIGHT AFTER THAT OLD INU-SOMETHING GUY'S RETALIATION...
ON TOP OF THAT, DEMONSTRATIONS HAVE BEEN INCREASING!

WE HAVEN'T SEEN SHOCKWAVES LIKE THIS SPREAD THROUGH THE PUBLIC SINCE GEN AKUTSU'S RETALIATION!

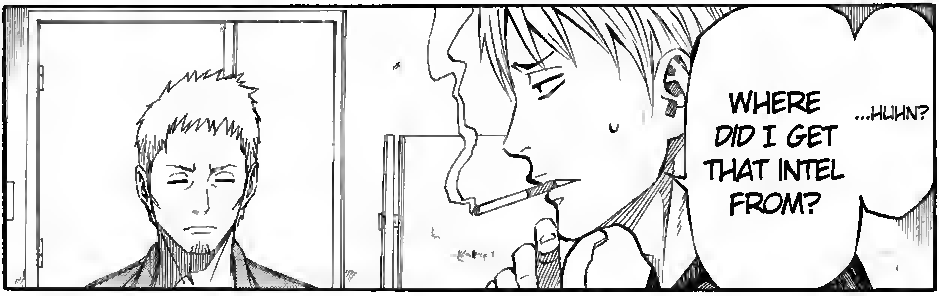

THIS IS WHAT WE'VE BEEN AFTER! THIS IS WHAT WE INHERITED FROM OUR PREDECESSORS!
命
INOCHI
ALL THOSE THINGS WILL BUILD TO CHANGE THE DEATH BY RETALIATION LAW.

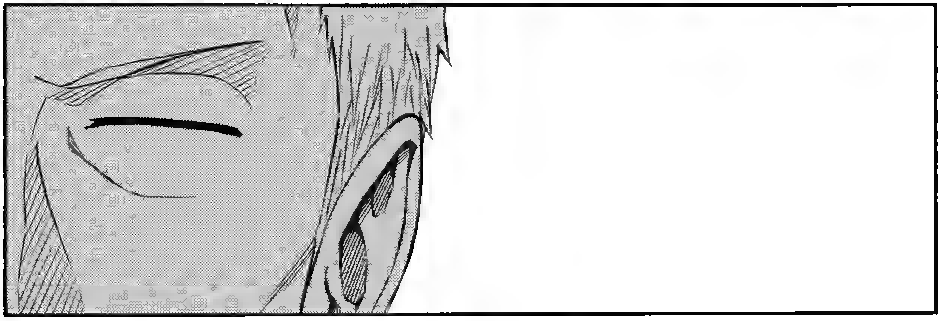
I KNOW YOU'RE WORRIED BECAUSE YOU'RE PART OF THE FOUNDING GROUP...
...PEOPLE WILL THINK WE WERE BEHIND THAT ARENA BOMBING.
THINK OF THE TIMING. IF WE STAGE OUR PROTEST NOW...
LET'S RIDE THE WAVE! AS INOCHI, WE'LL STAGE OUR OWN PROTEST!!
.....
...SAKURADA-SAN.
THEY ALSO KNOW THEY CAN'T CONNECT US TO THIS SO-CALLED EXTREMIST BRANCH OR WHATEVER THEY CALL IT, EITHER.
BUT THE COPS KNOW THAT INOCHI DOESN'T HAVE THE MONEY OR THE MANPOWER TO PULL THAT STUNT OFF.


NOW'S THE PERFECT CHANCE TO DRAG HIM OFF HIS SEAT!
THE NEWS SAYS HE'S IN A PRETTY TIGHT SPOT WITH ALL THAT'S BEEN HAPPENING!
BESIDES, HAVEN'T YOU HEARD ABOUT OUR EXECUTION-LOVING JUSTICE MINISTER?


EH?!
WHERE'D YOU GET THAT INTEL?

THE JUSTICE MINISTER? IN A BIND?


WHERE DID I GET THAT INTEL FROM?
...HUHN?

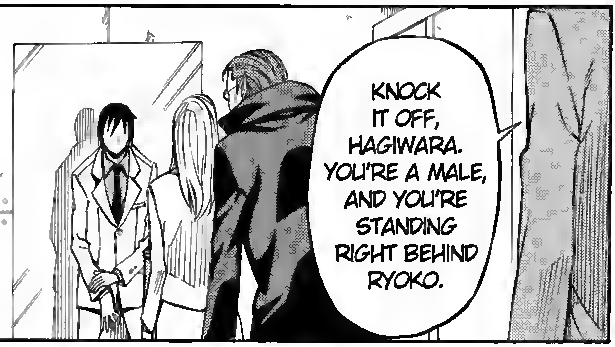


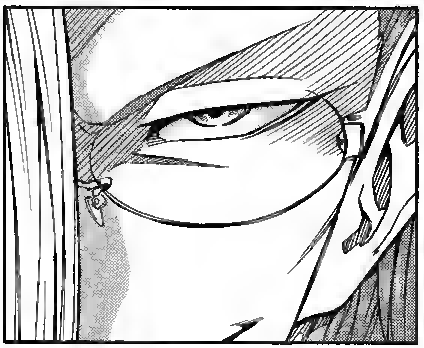
NO MATTER THE ERA, OGRES WILL ALWAYS BE LOATHED.
IT'S PROBABLY A TIDBIT SHARED BY ALL SORTS OF PROTEST GROUPS.
SO WE DON'T KNOW THE SOURCE...
!
MEAN-ING...?
...BUT IT'S HARD TO BE PATIENT IN TIMES LIKE THIS.
OF COURSE, LIKE ALWAYS, WE'LL LET THEM SHOW THEMSELVES IN TIME...
...THE INTEL FROM THE EXTREMISTS WILL POP UP WHEN IT'S MOST CONVENIENT FOR THEM.
IF WE STAY PLANTED WITHIN INOCHI AND KEEP OUR HEADS LOW...
USE OUR LADIES AS YOUR ESCORTS IF YOU HAVE TO.
FWIP
!?

!?
2 3 4
5 6 7 9
GCHIK
ガチャ
SENPAI?
THROB
5
OH! H-HEY RYOKO!
7
SHFF

I'M OKAY!
IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN I...
.....
I PICKED THAT UP WHILE WORKING WITH YOU.
...YOU TOUCH YOUR LIPS WHENEVER THERE'S SOMETHING BIG TROUBLING YOU.
...REALLY...
HEY YUUJI, YOU SEEM A LITTLE... DIFFERENT NOWADAYS...
SHFF

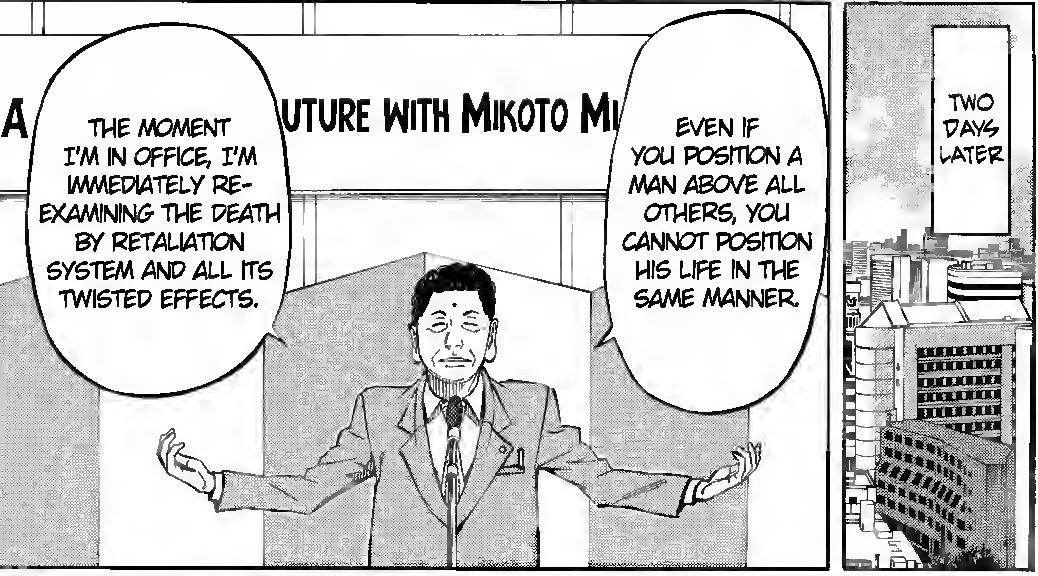
Mutter
PERHAPS THE OTHER SIDE OF YOU...
...IS AWAKEN-ING...


KNOCK IT OFF, HAGIWARA. YOU'RE A MALE, AND YOU'RE STANDING RIGHT BEHIND RYOKO.



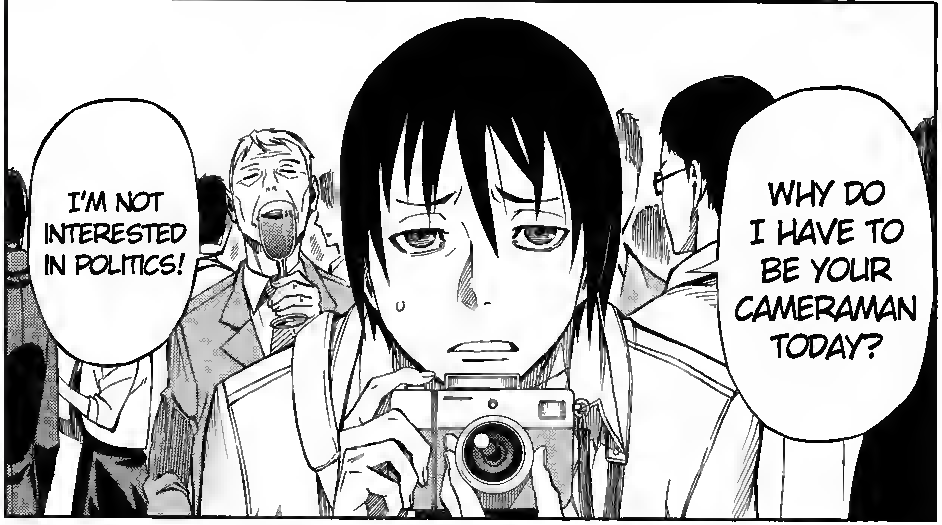
...YOU'D BETTER BACK OFF RIGHT NOW.
IF YOU DON'T WANT HER FIST IN YOUR FACE...

!
RYOKO... PLEASE COME WITH ME. CAPTAIN'S ORDERS.
HEH HEH... I'M JUST JOKING AROUND.
A TEAM MISSION, EH...?
YOU BETTER MAKE SURE YOU'RE NOT STANDING BEHIND HER.
OOH, WHICH REMINDS ME, I OUGHTA WATCH MY BACK TOO.
YOU KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.
HARU!
Haruka Yanase
ウィィィィィィィ
WHRRRRR
WHRRRRR

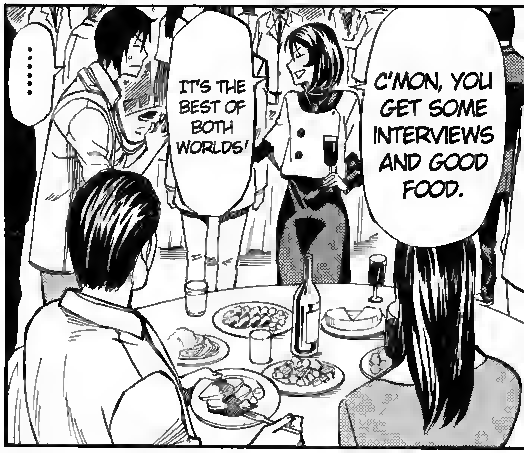

A UTURE WITH MIKOTO MI
THE MOMENT I'M IN OFFICE, I'M IMMEDIATELY RE-EXAMINING THE DEATH BY RETALIATION SYSTEM AND ALL ITS TWISTED EFFECTS.
EVEN IF YOU POSITION A MAN ABOVE ALL OTHERS, YOU CANNOT POSITION HIS LIFE IN THE SAME MANNER.
TWO DAYS LATER

PLEASE SUPPORT MIKOTO MITOBOTOKE IN RECTIFYING OUR JUSTICE SYSTEM!
Yeah!
That's right!
TO DO THAT, IT IS PARAMOUNT THAT EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM LENDS ME THEIR STRENGTH.

AND ON MY DAY OFF TOO...
YAMMER
YAMMER
THIS FUNDRAISER PARTY IS HUGE! BUT THEN IT IS BEING THROWN FOR THE GUY WHO THEY SAY WILL BE OUR NEXT MINISTER OF JUSTICE!


I'M NOT INTERESTED IN POLITICS!
WHY DO I HAVE TO BE YOUR CAMERAMAN TODAY?

!
OH MY GOD HE'S HUGE UP CLOSE!
WELL... AREN'T YOU FROM SAKURA-MOMO PUBLISHING?
LURCH ズドゥ


.....
IT'S THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS!
C'MON, YOU GET SOME INTERVIEWS AND GOOD FOOD.

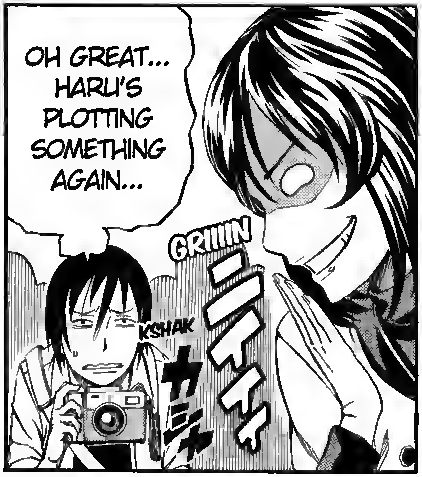
HEY...

Good luck, sir!
!
PLEASE ENJOY.
UNFORTUNATELY, THERE ARE A GREAT MANY PEOPLE HERE I NEED TO SEE, BUT I'D LOVE TO HAVE AN INTERVIEW WITH YOU ONE DAY.

I LOVED YOUR ARTICLE ON THE DEATH BY RETALIATION ACT! IT CUT RIGHT TO THE CHASE!
PLEASE KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!
HE'S LIKE A GIANT BUDDHA STATUE.
HONORED, SIR.

...IS HE DOING HERE?!
WHAT THE HELL...

DO YOU KNOW HOW I GET AROUND STRANGERS?! I DON'T WANT THEM LOOKING MY WAY!
HEY, I KNOW SOMEONE OVER THERE. COME WITH ME, I WANNA EAT WITH HIM.


OH GREAT... HARU'S PLOTTING SOMETHING AGAIN...
GRIIIIN
KSHAK

BING
SCOUTING OUT THE ENEMY...?

UHH... I'M HER CAMERAMAN. NICE TO...
SHFF
LONG TIME NO SEE! HOW ABOUT WE EAT TOGE-THER?

W-WAIT, HARU! HARU!
FWIP
FWIP
She's fast!

...MEET...
YOU ?!

WELL HEY, NOW THAT I KNOW YOU WERE HERE, I BET I CAN WHIP UP SOMETHING EXTRA-JUICY FOR MY MAG!
HIL
TURN
...SOMETHING'S COME UP.
...A POLITICAL FUNDRAISER...?
A PARTY FOR THE FUTURE WITH MIKOTO MITOBOTOKE
Date: 7 Nov. 2022 1:00PM
Place: San'nIJi Plaza 2F
Sponsor: Mikoto Mitobotoke Backers Association
Membership Fee: 20,000 yen
Ticket
¥20000
This event is a political fundraiser as prescribed by the Regulation of Political Funds Law, Code 8.2.
USE OUR LADIES AS OUR ESCORTS IF YOU HAVE TO.
SHFF
WHY THE BIG RUSH?
!?
THEY CALL HIM NEXT IN LINE TO BE THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE.
THAT'S RIGHT. THIS IS MINISTER ONIZUKA'S CANDIDATE FOR SUCCESSORSHIP.
WAIT A MINUTE...

...CALLS TO AMEND THE DEATH BY RETALIATION LAW ARE GROWING.
WE DON'T KNOW IF IT'S HIS OWN DOING OR THAT OF HIS BACKERS, BUT...
I'M NOT A BIG FAN OF PARTIES, SIR.
THAT'S WHY I'M TELLING YOU TO TAKE ONE OF OUR LADIES WITH YOU.
I FEEL WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO DO A LITTLE MORE TO FIND OUT HOW THOSE OPPOSED TO OUR WORK ARE MOVING.
WE'LL LIKELY GET GOOD INFO FROM THAT MAN'S RICH BACKERS AND ANY ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS WHO MAINTAIN CLOSE CONTACT WITH HIM.
...AS AN OLD-TIMER FROM THE ONE AND ONLY "INOCHI."
I DON'T LIKE THE SOUND OF THIS...
BESIDES, I'M PRETTY SURE YOUR PRESENCE THERE WILL BE VERY WELCOME...

PLEASED TO MEET YOU.
THIS GIRL'S MY YOUNGER SISTER, ACTUALLY.
YEP... PARTIES ARE DEFINITELY NOT GOOD...
WHAT... THE HELL... IS GOING ON?!
THIS IS YUUJI. WE'RE COLLEGE BUDDIES.
THEY'RE NOTHING ALIKE.
MY NAME'S HARUKA! YOU CAN CALL ME HARU FOR SHORT.
BUT THE WORLD HE COMES FROM IS DIMENSIONS APART FROM WHERE YOU ARE RIGHT NOW.
MMGH...!
HE'S FULLA SECRETS, THOUGH. HE HASN'T EVEN TOLD ME HIS NAME.
THIS MAN IS MY SAVIOR. I TOLD YOU ABOUT HIM BEFORE.

WELL... ASSISTO--
EH?!
!!!
THAT'S A LAME JOKE AT THE WRONG TIME, YOU DORK!
BONK
YEAGH!
...HE REMINDS ME OF A BUDDY WHO CALLS HIMSELF ASS-MEISTER, Y'KNOW?
EH? I MEAN...
Holy crap almost blew it...
!
...HARU CAN BE A BIT TOO MUCH TO HANDLE... HA HA.
...AS YOU CAN SEE WITH OUR SCHTICK...
HRGH.
.....

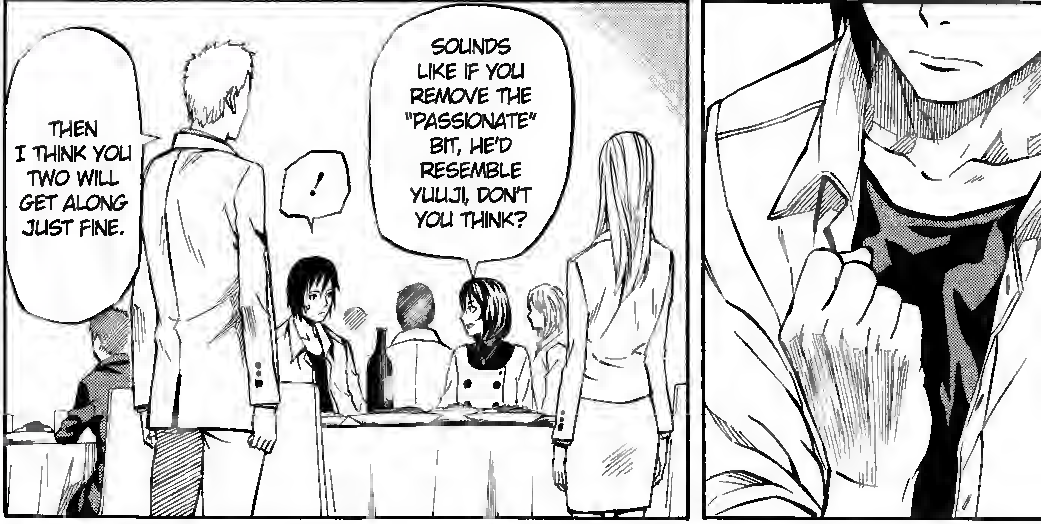
Seriously though, I'm so glad she's okay!
ANYWAY, CAN I INTERVIEW YOU HERE?
STILL AS PASSIONATE AS EVER FOR YOUR JOB, I SEE...
I'LL TAKE THAT AS A COMPLIMENT, SIR.

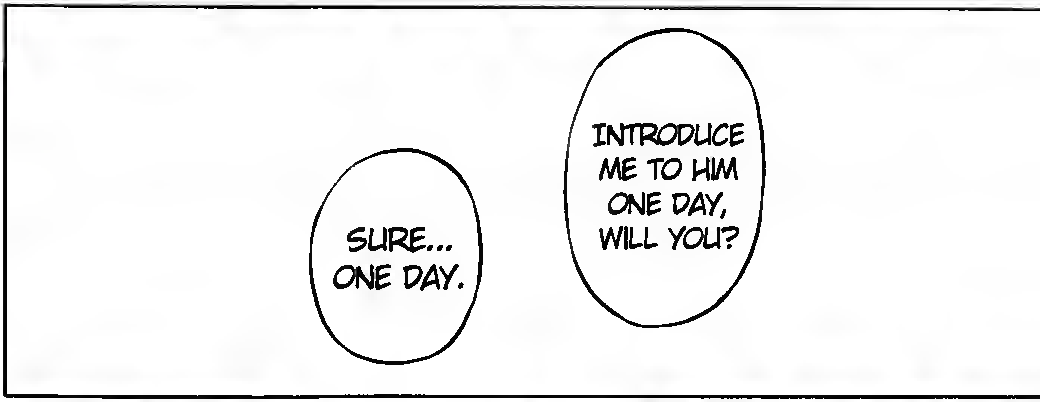
WE HAVE A CO-WORKER WHO'S A BIT OVERLY PASSIONATE ABOUT HIS JOB, TOO.
HE'S ABOUT YOUR AGE...
OVERLY PASSIONATE?
WAIT... HE'S CHANGING SUBJECTS.
!
IF HE'S A MAN MY AGE WHO'S PASSIONATE ABOUT HIS JOB... THAT WOULD MAKE FOR SOME GOOD INTERVIEW MATERIAL.
BUT IF HE WAS MY CO-WORKER, WE'D NEVER GET ALONG. TOO MANY SIMILARITIES.
I MEAN, AS LONG AS HE AIN'T JUST AN IDIOT LIKE YUUJI...
WHA--?!
I THINK YOU'D BE PERFECT FOR EACH OTHER.
.....
HMM? DO YOU REALLY THINK SO?
THAT'S... KINDA EMBARRASSING.
.....
...I MEET A LOT OF PEOPLE LIKE ME AT WORK.
.....

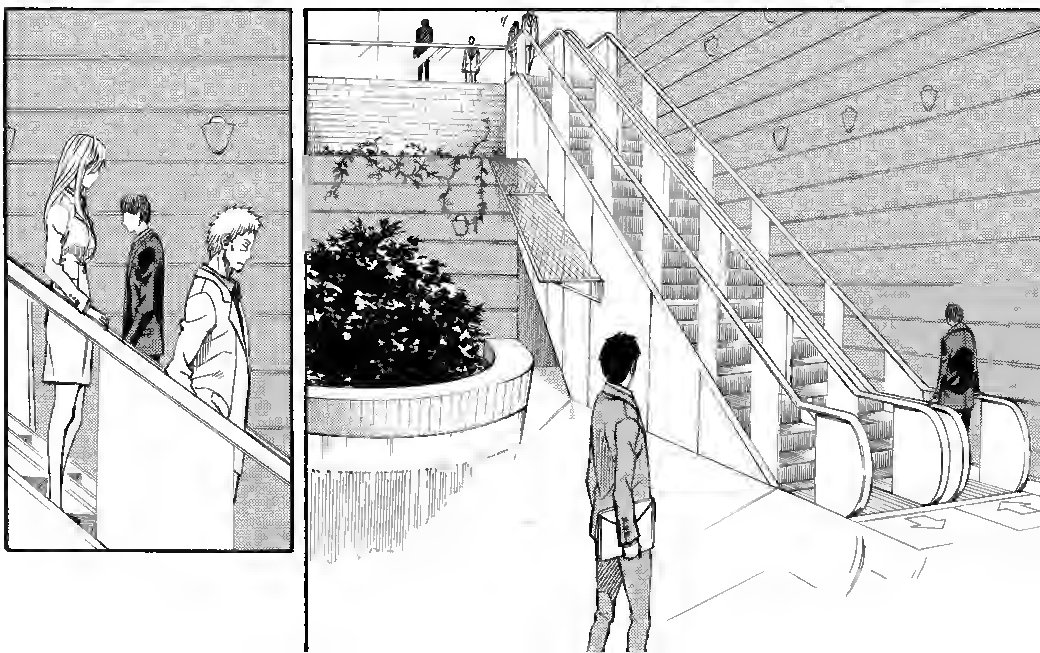
IT'S NOT SUCH A BAD THING. WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER.
?
!?
.....
I DON'T HAVE THE LUXURY TO DO THAT!
THIS AIN'T MIKE'S RAMEN. WE NEED TO SAVOR THIS STUFF.
WE HAVEN'T EVEN TAKEN A BITE OF OUR FOOD.
UHH... WE SHOULD GO, HARU. WE'VE GOT PHOTOS WE NEED TO TAKE
YOU LOOK LIKE THERE'S SOMEONE WHO'S CAUGHT YOUR EYE AT WORK.
EH?!

TAKE YOUR TIME, YOU TWO.
WE NEED TO BE OFF, SO IF YOU'LL EXCUSE US...
ALREADY? TOO BAD.
I WANT TO SAY ONE LAST THING.
I CAN'T SAY TOO MUCH BECAUSE YUUJI'S HERE, BUT...
...NO MATTER WHAT HARDSHIPS LAY AHEAD OF ME...
...I WILL CHANGE THINGS WITH MY ARTICLES.
SO PREPARE YOURSELF...
...TO KEEP YOUR PROMISE TO ME.
!
SHFF
YOUR PROMISE...
...IS TO TELL ME YOUR NAME WHEN THE TIME COMES.

YOU REALLY DO RESEMBLE OUR RESIDENT WORKAHOLIC.
I LIKE YOUR CONVICTION. IT FEELS GREAT JUST TO WITNESS IT.
...EVEN THOUGH HE'S AN IDIOT...
...I HAVE COMPLETE FAITH IN HIM, TOO.
THAT'S WHY...
...BUT HE FIGHTS THROUGH ANY HARDSHIP WITH THE FAITH HE HAS IN HIMSELF.
HE'S CLUMSY AND NERVOUS, AND HE'S ALWAYS COMPARING THINGS...

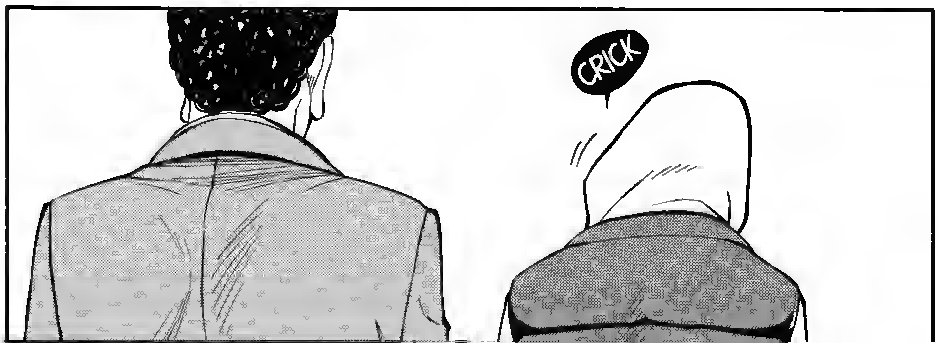

THEN I THINK YOU TWO WILL GET ALONG JUST FINE.
!
SOUNDS LIKE IF YOU REMOVE THE "PASSIONATE" BIT, HE'D RESEMBLE YUUJI, DON'T YOU THINK?


INTRODUCE ME TO HIM ONE DAY, WILL YOU?
SURE... ONE DAY.



YUUJI-SENPAI CAN SMILE LIKE THAT...
...EVEN WHEN HE'S NOT WORKING...
NOT REALLY...
DOES IT BOTHER YOU?
IT'S RARE TO HEAR THAT FROM YOU.
THEN RIGHT NOW...
.....

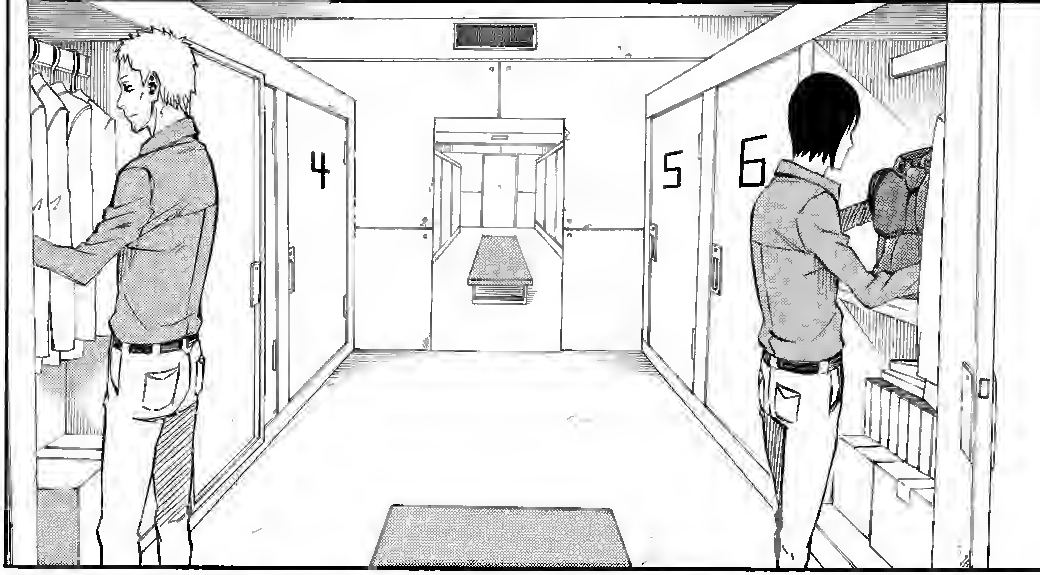
SIR.
...FOCUS ON WHAT'S AHEAD OF US.


CRICK

ケホ
CRICK
KEHOOH
!
PEEK
WHERE HAVE I SEEN THAT BEFORE ...
HIS BODY LAN-GUAGE...
I KNOW I'VE SEEN THOSE MANNER-ISMS BEFORE...
LOOKS LIKE THE END OF THE LINE. THE RISKS WILL GROW THE MORE WE PURSUE.
MAYBE THEY KNEW THEY WERE BEING TAILED...
.....

ARE YOU SURE YOU WEREN'T JUST SEEING THINGS?
IT'S TRUE THAT I ONLY SAW IT FOR A MOMENT, SO I CAN'T SAY FOR SURE.
MY PEOPLE-WATCHING SKILLS AREN'T AS SHARP AS YUUJI'S...
CRICK
...BUT IF I FEEL LIKE I'VE SEEN THOSE PARTICULAR TICS...
...THEN I CAN ONLY SAY I'VE SEEN THEM MANY TIMES BEFORE NOW.
I WOULD'VE LIKED TO HAVE OBSERVED THEM A BIT MORE...
...BUT SOMETHING UNEXPECTED CROPPED UP DURING THE MISSION.
RYOKO'S ALREADY REPORTED ON THAT TOO.
CAPTAIN...
!?

命
YUUJI KNOWS THAT HIS FATHER CREATED THE HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP "INOCHI."
RIGHT...?
OF COURSE HE'S AWARE OF IT AT THIS POINT.
.....
IN ANY CASE, I'M CONCERNED ABOUT THAT HOODED MAN.
IF ANYTHING COMES TO MIND, TELL ME IMMEDIATELY.
OTHERWISE, CONTINUE AS YOU ARE WITHIN INOCHI.
UNDERSTOOD, SIR.

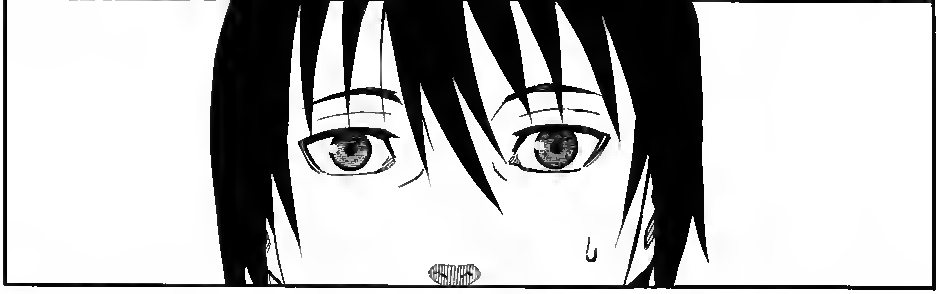

4
5
6

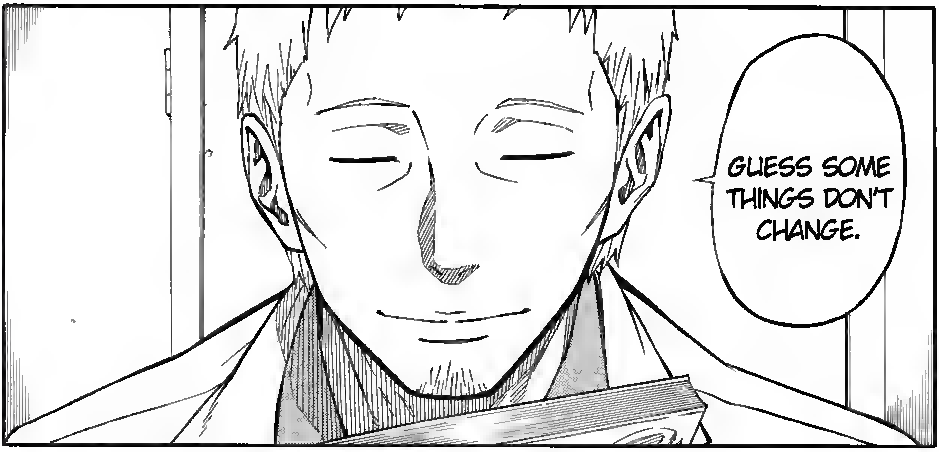
UMM... SAKURADA-SAN.
THANK YOU FOR YESTERDAY.

N-NO... IT'S NOT THAT...
...BUT HE FIGHTS THROUGH ANY HARD-SHIP WITH THE FAITH HE HAS IN HIMSELF. THAT'S WHY...
...EVEN THOUGH HE'S AN IDIOT, I HAVE COMPLETE FAITH IN HIM TOO.
THAT WAS SOME PRETTY GOOD IMPROV BACK THERE.
SAME GOES TO YOU, MY FRIEND.

...HE GIVES ME A LITTLE COURAGE AND TELLS ME TO KEEP IT TOGETHER.
JUST WHEN I WAS ABOUT TO LOSE MYSELF WITH ALL THAT'S BEEN HAPPENING...
IT'S AS IF...

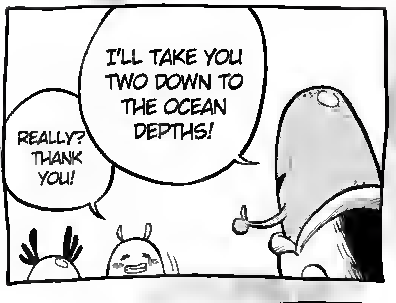
SLAM
WHAT'S WRONG, YUUJI?
AH.
FWAP
PFWAP
!!
UH, NOTHING! NOTH--
!
OH HO HO? ARE THESE NAUGHTY BOOKS OR SOMETHING?

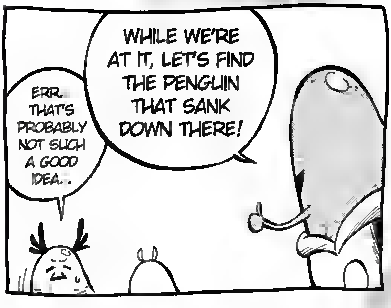


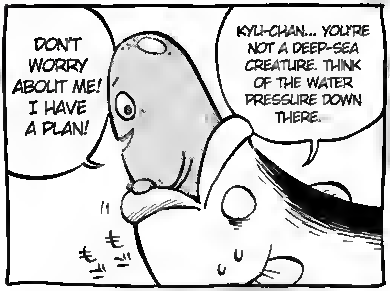

I GUESS SOME THINGS DON'T CHANGE.

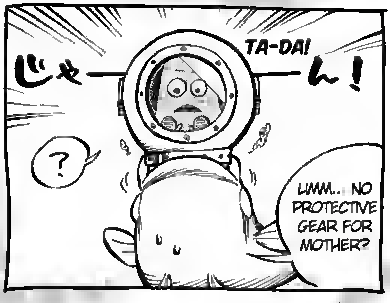
WELCOME
JOHN・BAR
1
YOUR LOVE OF HERO STORIES, FOR ONE.
ガンズ・ヒーロー
GUNS HERO

DEEP-SEA STRATEGY

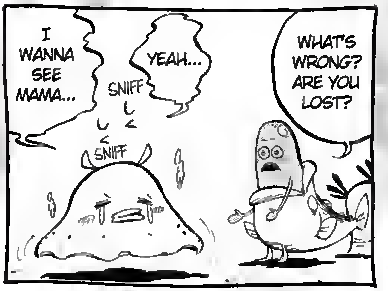


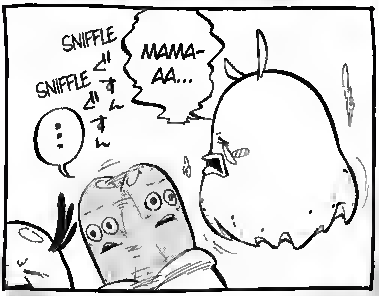


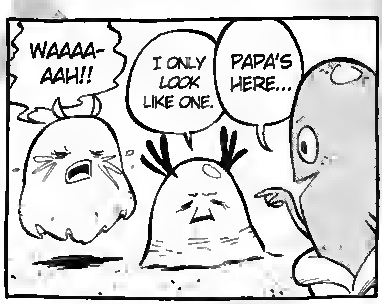


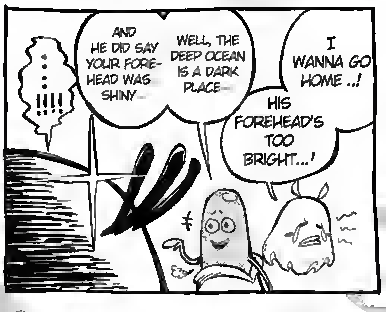


FLAPJACK OCTOPUS FROM THE OCEAN DEPTHS









English Digital Edition
Chapter 017

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Seishi Kishimoto

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